

Taking a step back, globalization has also had a massive effect on markets and consumption, as multi-national corporations have risen to serve many markets which are increasingly connected. This effect has been amplified due to the internet, a 'super innovation' (Dickson, 2000), which allows for global-scale supply chains and sales, and information exchanges and cultural interactions across international borders. Naturally people now have greater exposure to other cultures, and some of the results of this are those as previously mentioned where consumers in Less Industrialised Countries possess Western goods as a status symbol. However, interestingly, Ustuner and Holt (2010) look further into this phenomenon, and suggest that in these countries Western lifestyle is more than anything a myth, and is interpreted and constructed differently depending on the local culture. These consumers also do not accept all the Western ideologies and practices that are embedded in the goods but take the foreign brands and attach their own meanings to them – Coca Cola for example has been indigenized in Trinidad through intersections with the Trinidadian notion of sweet drinks (Miller, 1998). On the other hand, Cleveland et al suggest that rather than convergence, globalization can also uphold differences among people within national boundaries.

So what does this mean for marketers? As consumers from different cultures attach their own meanings to products and value different aspects, marketers should recognize this and adapt their strategies to promote an image of their product based around what is valued the culture most associated with the product category. A manufacturer of tools and machines for example might be advised to adopt a German sounding name, due to the association people make between Germany and technical reliability. Usunier and Lee (2005) state that the company name, brand name and 'made in' label are all aspects that should be adjusted to portray the most desired symbolic meanings – in developed countries this might be to emphasise domestically produced goods rather than foreign-made products, tapping into consumer's patriotism and general view that domestic products are of a higher quality. Wang et al investigated the factors that Chinese and Taiwanese tourists valued most in their tourist destinations. While the Taiwanese tourists valued the tour leader, guide and restaurants, the Chinese cared more about pre-tour briefings, restaurant offerings and optional tours. Taking this case study, it would seem that marketers would massively benefit from personalizing their product offerings depending on the market they are selling to.

Another trend that has proved popular in marketing is the use of business anthropologists to gain a greater understanding of consumers' wants and needs. Jacobs (2013) writes that anthropologists contextualise products and services in terms of social and cultural meanings and practices, which is something companies struggle to do themselves. As they work largely without hypotheses they are trying to prove the resulting open-ended research picks up on the 'mundane details' that many researchers miss, and result in product innovations which prove extremely popular. For example John Curran, a business anthropologist working for a greeting card company, found that there was a missed market in people remembering their deceased, who were currently unserved by greeting cards written in the present tense. Such opportunities may go unnoticed if consumer behaviour is continued to be treated so categorically.